

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-14 ISO-00 AF-10 NIC-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 SAJ-01

DRC-01 OMB-01 /160 W

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R 071747Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6238

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USINT CAIRO

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 14417

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UK, UR, XF

SUBJECT: BRITISH-SOVIET TALKS: THE MIDDLE EAST

REF: LONDON 14360 (NOTAL); MOSCOW 15149

1. WE DEBRIEFED FCO DEPT. HEAD CRAIG, WHO ACCOMPANIED FOREIGN SECRETARY DOUGLAS-HOME TO MOSCOW, ON ME PORTION OF TALKS WHICH WERE OTHERWISE REPORTED ON IN REFTEL. HIS VERSION SUBSTANTIATED BROAD LINES PROVIDED CHARGE DUBS IN MOSCOW BY DOUGLAS-HOME AND REPORTED MOSCOW'S 15149. POINTS OF DIVERGENCE, AND SUPPLEMENTARY POINTS, CONFIDENTIAL

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BELOW.

2. SOVIETS HAD BEEN PLEASANT BUT NON-COMMITTAL ON MANY BRITISH QUESTIONS, INCLUDING DOUGLAS-HOME'S BLUNT QUERY TO GROMYKO WHETHER USSR IS INVOLVED IN MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR GENEVA CONFERENCE OR NOT. GROMYKO REPLIED USSR WAS "IN MIDSTREAM." IN THAT CASE, DOUGLAS-HOME CRACKED, BRITAIN WAS ON THE RIVER BANK. CRAIG WAS STILL PUZZLED OVER THAT GROMYKO REPLY, THOUGH HE HAD HIS GUESSES.

3. ON QUESTION OF GUARANTEES, CRAIG SAID GROMYKO HAD BEEN FLATLY NEGATIVE. HOWEVER, IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH PODGORNYY WHICH ONLY DOUGLAS-HOME AND BRITISH AMBASSADOR GARVEY ATTENDED, PODGORNYY APPARENTLY TOOK DIFFERENT, POSITIVE LINE, WHICH DOUGLAS-HOME THEN REPORTED TO DUBS.

4. ON DMZS GROMYKO TALKED ABOUT EQUIDISTANCE ON BOTH SIDES OF BORDER IN FORMAL CONVERSATION. IN CORRIDOR AFTERWARD, SIMIENKO TOLD CRAIG SOVIETS REALLY HAD IN MIND SOME SORT OF FACE-SAVING DMZS IN ISRAEL, EVEN IF THESE OF SMALLER SIZE THAN ON ARAB SIDE. THIS SOVIET READINESS TO DRAW DISTINCTION BETWEEN FACE-SAVING SYMBOLISM AND REALITY APPEARED SIGNIFICANT TO CRAIG.

5. AS TO SOVIET WISH PARTICIPATE IN ANY UN PEACE GUARANTEEING FORCE AS PART OF PEACE TREATY, SOVIETS WERE AGAIN NON-COMMITTAL. ACCORDING TO CRAIG, GROMYKO DID NOT COMMENT WHEN DOUGLAS-HOME MENTIONED POSSIBLE PEACEKEEPING FORCE IN DMZS, AND BRITISH WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IF ASKED. CRAIG ASKED SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL SIMIENKO ABOUT SOVIET DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE IN CORRIDOR AFTERWARD. THE RUSSIAN REPLIED THAT IF SOVIETS ASKED TO PARTICIPATE THEY WOULD AGREE TO CONSIDER IT PROVIDED REQUEST WAS FOR TROOPS ON BOTH SIDES OF BORDER. CRAIG ASSURED US, AGAIN, THAT BRITISH HAVE NO DESIRE PER SE TO BE PART OF PEACEKEEPING FORCE THOUGH THEY CONTINUE TO VIEW SUCH FORCE LIKELY TO EMERGE IF PEACE CONFERENCE SUCCEEDS, AND THEY COULD NOT VISUALIZE TASK OF PROVIDING CONTINGENTS BEING LEFT TO VARIOUS SMALL STATES AROUND THE WORLD.
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6. AGAIN IN CORRIDOR, CRAIG ASKED SIMIENKO WHAT SOVIETS THINK OF IDEA OF CONVENING SECURITY COUNCIL TO DISCUSS GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE. SIMIENKO SAID SOVIETS DO NOT FAVOR THIS.

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